



# SECURITY COUNCIL OFFICIAL RECORDS

TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR

**1544**<sup>th</sup> MEETING: 12 JUNE 1970

NEW YORK

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#### NOTE

*Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.*

Documents of the Security Council (symbol S/ . . . ) are normally published in quarterly *Supplements of the Official Records of the Security Council*. The date of the document indicates the supplement in which it appears or in which information about it is given.

The resolutions of the Security Council, numbered in accordance with a system adopted in 1964, are published in yearly volumes of *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council*. The new system, which has been applied retroactively to resolutions adopted before 1 January 1965, became fully operative on that date.

## FIFTEEN HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOURTH MEETING

Held in New York on Friday, 12 June 1970, at 3 p.m.

*President:* Mr. P. KHATRI (Nepal).

*Present:* The representatives of the following States: Burundi, China, Colombia, Finland, France, Nepal, Nicaragua, Poland, Sierra Leone, Spain, Syria, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Zambia.

### Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/1544)

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. The question of initiating periodic meetings of the Security Council in accordance with Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter:

Letter dated 5 June 1970 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/9824).

### Adoption of the agenda

*The agenda was adopted.*

### The question of initiating periodic meetings of the Security Council in accordance with Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter:

Letter dated 5 June 1970 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/9824)

1. The PRESIDENT: This meeting has been convened, in accordance with the request of the representative of Finland in his letter of 5 June 1970 [S/9824], "to consider the question of initiating periodic meetings of the Security Council in accordance with Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter". In this connexion, I should like to draw attention to the note by the President of the Security Council dated 20 April 1970 [S/9759], enclosing a memorandum from the delegation of Finland and proposing, in his capacity as the representative of Finland, that consultations should be undertaken on this matter.

2. In accordance with this suggestion, consultations have been held with the members of the Security Council and, as a result, I have been authorized to make a statement expressing the consensus of the Council. The text of that statement is as follows:

"The members of the Security Council have considered the question of initiating periodic meetings in accordance with Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter. They consider that the holding of periodic meetings, at which each member of the Council would be represented by a member of the Government or by some other specially designated representative, could enhance the authority of the Security Council and make it a more effective instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security. As to the date and other practical aspects of the first such meeting, these will be considered later in consultations.

"It is understood that periodic meetings, the purpose of which would be to enable the Security Council to discharge more effectively its responsibilities under the Charter, would provide members with an opportunity for a general exchange of views on the international situation, rather than for dealing with any particular question, and that such meetings would normally be held in private, unless it were otherwise decided.

"The provisional agenda of periodic meetings shall be drawn up by the Secretary-General in consultation with the members of the Council and in accordance with the relevant provisions of the provisional rules of procedure."

3. As the statement which I have just read out was the subject of prior consultations, I take it that it may now be considered as approved by the Security Council.

*It was so decided.*

4. The PRESIDENT: Some members of the Security Council have asked to speak in connexion with the matter before us this afternoon. The first speaker inscribed is the representative of Finland, on whom I now call.

5. Mr. JAKOBSON (Finland): It gives me great pleasure to extend the best wishes of my delegation and myself to you, Sir, as President for the month of June and as representative of a country which has played such a constructive role in the work of the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole.

6. I am also very happy to have the opportunity to pay tribute to your predecessor, the representative of France, who guided us through the storms of May with such a firm yet tactful hand.

7. As this meeting of the Security Council has been convened at the request of my delegation, I should make it clear at the outset that Finland claims no exclusive copyright to the idea of breathing life into Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter. Secretary-General U Thant and, before him, Dag Hammarskjöld and Trygve Lie, have advocated the holding of periodic meetings of the Security Council at ministerial level. Other statesmen, among them the Foreign Minister of Belgium, Pierre Harmel, have made the same suggestion. Most recently, the proposal on the strengthening of international security, put forward by the Government of the Soviet Union at the last session of the General Assembly,<sup>1</sup> included a recommendation addressed to the Security Council to consider this question. In the debate on this proposal many delegations spoke in favour of initiating periodic meetings in accordance with Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter and the widespread interest which this idea has aroused among Member States is also reflected in the replies of Governments on measures for the strengthening of international security, circulated in the Secretary-General's report of 15 May 1970.<sup>2</sup>

8. The active interest that my Government has taken in pursuing this matter in the past months arises from Finland's strong commitment to the United Nations as the primary instrument available to States for maintaining peace and security. I had occasion to speak about this on 24 January of last year when Finland was represented at this table for the first time. I said:

"As a small neutral country which has sought and found security not through reliance on military alliances . . . but through a foreign policy designed to keep it outside international conflicts and controversies. Finland has a vital interest in promoting the development of a peaceful and rational world order based on the universal collective security system provided by the Charter of the United Nations. The primary responsibility for the effective functioning of this system rests with the Security Council—the supreme organ of co-operation between nations for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security." [1463rd meeting, para. 14.]

It follows that we wish to do whatever we can to make the Security Council more effective and more responsive to the needs of international life.

9. No one needs to be persuaded that the Security Council so far has failed to play the role it was originally supposed to play in international affairs. Too often during the past quarter century, at moments of crises and conflicts threatening the peace of the world, the Security Council has been reduced to sterile debate or completely bypassed by events. The reason for this is, of course, not any structural weakness or deficiency, but the lack of agreement between the major Powers on making use of the Council for the purpose for which it was created.

<sup>1</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 103, document A/7654.

<sup>2</sup> Document A/7922.

10. The effective functioning of the Council, and therefore of the whole system of collective security of the United Nations, presupposes a measure of common purpose among its Members, and particularly the major Powers, permanent members of the Security Council. During the period of the cold war this common purpose was manifestly lacking. In recent years, while the rivalry between them continues in many areas, the major Powers have shown a greater measure of willingness to work together for the preservation of peace. As a result, the effectiveness of the Security Council has increased. At least in some situations the Council has been able to take action to contain conflicts which otherwise might have endangered international security.

11. Today the Security Council has taken a further step in this direction by deciding to make use of the provisions of Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter. In itself, the addition of a few more meetings to the schedule of the Security Council would not seem to be much of an advance. Potentially, however, the holding of periodic meetings at ministerial level, especially once they become customary, could mean a qualitative improvement in the functioning of the Security Council. They would add a new dimension to its role as guardian of world peace. Instead of merely reacting to violent events, the Security Council could begin to look forward and take action in time to forestall conflict.

12. I realize that more often than not the failure of the Council to direct events in the interests of maintaining peace and security has been due to lack of agreement on how to deal with the political issues which cause conflicts between nations. But at times the difficulties in the way of constructive international action for the maintenance of peace have been compounded by the absence of established procedures for advance consultations between the Powers concerned. A more imaginative use of the Security Council could remove such difficulties. Consultations within the Council can be held at any time without preliminary argument about the shape of the conference table.

13. Potentially, again, periodic meetings could contribute to making the United Nations what it originally was intended to be: the centre for international consultations on the vital issues affecting world peace. In the past decades the great Powers have usually held their talks outside the United Nations, while the Security Council too often has occupied itself with the trivialities of international life. Periodic meetings not only would provide the permanent members of the Council with a regular forum for high-level consultations, but also would create a new channel of communication between the permanent and the elected members of the Council, thus helping to bridge the power gap which, during the last session of the General Assembly, was the subject of much discussion.

14. Since we have no experience of periodic meetings, it is wise, I am sure, to allow them to evolve as freely as possible without putting them in advance into a procedural straitjacket. In the consultations that have preceded this meeting it has been agreed—as you,

Mr. President, have already stated—that periodic meetings should normally be held in private unless it is otherwise decided. It may well be that both private and public meetings will be held. It has also been agreed that the agenda for such meetings should be worked out by the Secretary-General in consultation with the members of the Council. We could imagine that the agenda might consist of a single item: a review of the international situation.

15. It is further understood that periodic meetings would provide members with an opportunity for a general exchange of views, rather than for dealing with any specific event or issue. Consequently, such meetings should not be expected necessarily to lead to decisions or resolutions, although, naturally, that would not be excluded. The compulsive habit of United Nations bodies to view every international problem in terms of a resolution sometimes inhibits members from even discussing important issues. Periodic meetings should be freed from that inhibition.

16. For understandable reasons it has not yet been possible to determine the date of the first periodic meeting of the Security Council. I am sure, however, that no one will disagree with me when I say that the forthcoming session of the General Assembly offers the obvious opportunity to make a start, and I trust that it will be possible to set a date before long. While the provisional rules of procedure stipulate that two such meetings be held annually, it is natural from a practical point of view that each meeting will have to decide on the next one. We for our part are convinced that the full value of periodic meetings will emerge only when they are regarded as a permanent institutional feature of the Security Council. Only thus will it be possible to build up a practice, or better still a habit, of consultation in an atmosphere free from the inflated expectations of summit meetings.

17. The holding of periodic meetings is but one of several proposals recently put forward for improving the functioning of the Security Council. I have in mind, among others, the ideas mentioned by the Governments of Brazil and the United States in their replies on the strengthening of international security.<sup>3</sup> They deserve most careful study. I think it is significant that there seems to be among the Members of the United Nations a greater interest than before in devising ways and means by which the Security Council could be made a more effective instrument for peace.

18. The Secretary-General said three years ago that previous efforts to implement the relevant provisions of the Charter on periodic meetings had failed, not on their merits, but on the basis of the prevailing atmosphere at the times when they were made.<sup>4</sup> Today, too, the international atmosphere is far from peaceful. War and conflict and tension prevail in several parts of the world. But surely the present state of international insecurity is an argument not against but for making every effort to strengthen and improve the

international machinery for making peace and keeping the peace. The decision to initiate periodic meetings of the Security Council in accordance with Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter is a modest step in that direction. New procedures in themselves solve nothing; it is for the members to put life and meaning into them; but by taking this step the members of the Security Council have demonstrated, in this twenty-fifth anniversary year of the Organization, their willingness to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations to discharge its primary responsibility, which is the maintenance of international peace and security.

19. Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) (*interpretation from French*): In the rather special language of the United Nations, in the rather esoteric vocabulary which is not immediately comprehensible or accessible to all the uninitiated, a consensus is an agreement which gives rise neither to enthusiasm nor to major objections. Indeed, if there were objections and if a single delegation demonstrated any opposition, it would be no longer a consensus but a "dissensus". That is not the case with the text which you, Mr. President, have read out to us and to which my delegation has willingly agreed. I should like very briefly to explain the reasons.

20. When it is a question of organizing periodic meetings of the Security Council in accordance with Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter, there can be no objection since it is simply a matter of applying provisions already contained in the Charter, and my delegation can only favour anything which would tend to strengthen the authority of the Security Council and increase the effectiveness of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. In this particular case there are provisions which were dormant for reasons familiar to everyone, and if the time seems ripe now for reviving those provisions, we can only see advantage in doing so.

21. Indeed, we consider that meetings at the ministerial level may prove useful for international co-operation in given circumstances, with the understanding that certain precautions would be taken; namely, preparation of the agenda beforehand by consensus of the members of the Council, private meetings so as to make it possible to hold wide-ranging and frank discussions on specific subjects to be determined or, even better, on a report from the Secretary-General relating to the over-all international situation. Moreover, it would provide an opportunity for the Security Council to mark appropriately the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations if we were to contemplate holding such a meeting at a date close to the commemorative session, taking advantage of the presence in New York of the Foreign Ministers who would be here. But obviously it would be in the light of the results of that meeting that it would be possible to decide whether to hold other meetings and at what intervals.

22. In the introduction to the annual report of the Secretary-General for the period 16 June 1966 to 15

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-second Session, Supplement No. 1A*, para. 159.

June 1967—the document quoted in the memorandum of the representative of Finland [S/9759]—U Thant, after stating that “a further effort to put these provisions into effect would seem opportune at the present time”, adds the following: “I have in mind a modest beginning to test the value of such meetings”.<sup>5</sup>

23. My delegation entirely shares the view of the Secretary-General and considers, as he does, that before going forward it would be wise to put the formula to the test. The Ambassador of Finland referred to this when he stressed the need for precautions. It would be useless and even dangerous to meet just for the sake of holding meetings of an academic kind outside the context of time and events, simply observing a ritual bearing no relationship to reality.

24. That is the scope and the range of the observations I wanted to make on behalf of the French delegation.

25. In conclusion I should like to convey our thanks to the representative of Finland for having brought this question to the attention of the Council and to express the hope that his initiative will be successful and that our first meeting at the governmental level will prove fruitful and will have a felicitous sequel.

26. Mr. TOMEH (Syria): Allow me first of all to praise the initiatives of the delegation of Finland under the chairmanship of Ambassador Jakobson which led to the adoption today by the Council of the consensus on the periodic meetings of the Security Council.

27. This question may, in the view of my delegation, be approached on three levels: first, the Security Council itself; second, the General Assembly and its efficiency as a whole; third, the international situation. These three levels are originally and organically related. To approach them separately is merely a matter of methodology, which reflects very often the limitations of our own minds.

28. With regard to the first, namely, the Security Council, due credit should be given to the memorandum submitted by Ambassador Jakobson on the subject of periodic meetings of the Security Council, which was circulated to the members of the Council on 20 April of this year [S/9759]. In that memorandum Ambassador Jakobson, with his well-known talent for an objective, scholarly approach, has reviewed the historical background of the consistent, cumulative efforts of the Secretaries-General from Trygve Lie to Dag Hammarskjöld to U Thant in order to implement Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter, unfortunately, without success so far. In that memorandum Ambassador Jakobson states:

“The question of periodic meetings of the Security Council was last discussed at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly in connexion with the item ‘Strengthening of international security’. The recommendation that the Security Council should consider the possibility of convening periodic meet-

ings in accordance with Article 28, paragraph 2, was part of the original proposal of the delegation of the Soviet Union on the basis of which this item was discussed in the Assembly. The resolution 2606 (XXIV) . . . [was] approved by acclamation on 16 December 1969 at the conclusion of the discussion of this item . . . ”

29. A recent document issued by the Secretary-General is document A/7922, dated 15 May 1970, entitled “Consideration of measures for the strengthening of international security”. This report reflects the importance that Member States give to this particular factor—namely, Article 28, paragraph 2—of the whole question of strengthening international security. In paragraph 11 of the introduction, the Secretary-General states:

“I also drew attention to the provision made in Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter for periodic meetings of the Security Council at which each of its members might be represented by a member of the Government or by some other specially designated representative. I continue to believe that, once initiated, such periodic meetings will provide an outstanding opportunity for a general review of matters relating to international peace and security and for seeking a consensus approach to such matters.”

Part II of the same report contains the answer of my Government, stating, *inter alia*:

“ . . . the Security Council should naturally be equipped with effective powers. The Charter does provide the Council with enforcement capabilities. The reinvigoration of the Council is therefore a need and a possibility. Any proposal to smooth the functioning of the Security Council—such as the periodic meetings provided for in Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter—would be welcomed by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. Its stand is motivated by respect for principles and apprehension of the great danger attending the international community if the Council sacrifices principles for the sake of expediency. The criteria of justice should definitely prevail over the criteria of force.”

30. Put in its proper perspective, this particular aspect of the work of the Council, if looked upon not only as a matter of procedure but rather of substance, raises the crisis of the Security Council itself and its efficiency, a crisis which could be summarized in the question how to make the work of the Security Council more effective and give to its decisions the force and the power that they should have, as representing the will of the international community.

31. To give due credit to our Secretary-General, U Thant, one should mention the fact that indeed he has not spared any effort to delve deeply and objectively into the crisis of the Security Council and to prescribe his recommendations for the strengthening of the work of the Council and consequently to help towards the solving of its crisis by implementing the decisions of

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

the Council as stipulated by the relevant articles of the Charter. I have in mind here three specific statements and addresses by the Secretary-General: first, his address to the Navy League in New York on 28 October 1969; second, his press conference on 4 January 1970 held at Dakar; third, his address in Tokyo on 15 April 1970.

32. In harmony with all these efforts and to emphasize the importance of the consensus adopted today, we would add the following:

(a) The suggested meetings will not be a substitute for the effective measures to be taken against violations of the Charter, nor will they uproot the ills of international society plagued by the spread of imperialist expansion, the revival of racism, and the prevalence of faits accomplis over the rules of law and justice. But they may serve as a catalyst, bringing about more sharply the urgent need for a halt in the deterioration of the international situation. Marked—as they are supposed to be—by this over-all characteristic, these meetings may be instrumental in pointing more sharply to the fallacy of expediency and half-solutions and the availability and feasibility of the criteria of law and justice if goodwill prevails, and reliance on sheer power is recognized as too inadequate, too retrograde to prescribe durable solutions to the burning problems of humanity.

(b) These meetings indeed may prove the available vehicle open before the Organization as a whole for the process of narrowing national interests and deepening international co-operation. The need and interest of mankind in a just and durable peace is too strong, too deep an aspiration to be taken lightly. If explored, developed and built up, it may consecrate the transformation of international law from a mere adjustment and juxtaposition of interests to an effective code of behaviour binding on all as it channels a community of interests, solidarity in peace, and co-operation in progress.

(c) It is also our understanding that the improvement of the functions of the Security Council implies the restoration of the balance of membership as originally envisaged by the framers of the Charter of the United Nations.

33. With regard to the second level, namely, that of the General Assembly, it is to be recalled here that resolution 2606 (XXIV), previously referred to and adopted by the General Assembly on 16 December 1969, has, as we have seen, in the second paragraph of its preamble, referred specifically to the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security conferred by the Charter on the Security Council, and to Article 28, paragraph 2.

34. We all know that the General Assembly, at its forthcoming session celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, will again take up the item submitted by the USSR, "The strengthening of international security". I am sure that the General

Assembly, in looking at this particular aspect of the work of the Council today, will undoubtedly welcome the consensus adopted unanimously by the Security Council, as it will be a factor that will strengthen the recommendations of the General Assembly when it takes up that item again.

35. If I may be permitted to quote again from the reply of my Government as reproduced in the report of the Secretary-General, we stated:

"The twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations should be the occasion to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations, to increase its ability to realize its objectives and to establish the foundations of international peace and justice."

36. I come now to the third and most important level of the approach to this question, namely, the international situation. The consensus adopted speaks of the periodic meetings as providing "members with an opportunity for a general exchange of views on the international situation". But what is the international situation? It is a self-evident truth that it consists of certain specific problems; these problems are ultimately of common concern to mankind. They are ultimately human problems, human situations, involving the human aspirations of mankind, its anxiety and suffering. We are now projecting our thinking into the future, but to divorce this thinking from those realities, unsatisfactory, sad or tragic as they may be, is really to have our thinking into the future turned into thinking in a vacuum.

37. The obverse side of security is insecurity, and this is what mankind at large is brooding about and what the peoples of the world are anxious to shun and avoid. Thus, to look into realistic and rational ways and means of strengthening the work of the Security Council, the General Assembly, and the United Nations at large is to respond to a widespread international human desire.

38. Such an obligation comes from the Charter itself. Its first words say that all we do here must be designed "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" and I submit that if we are to succeed in meeting this highest obligation, this principal organ of the United Nations—namely, the Security Council—had better turn from power-plays to humanity, from mere routine formalities to determining the moral equities at the heart of each of the great problems we are asked to confront. If we do that we will find the language for our resolutions and then we will find the techniques either for enforcing those decisions or for making the moral authority of this body so crystal clear that the peoples who comprise our constituency will demand of all of us that adequate enforcement machinery be found.

39. The general exchange of views referring to the international situation, of necessity and by the solid logic of facts, leads us into specific situations. While we are, as members of this august body, pledged to think first and foremost of the interests of humanity

at large—as indeed we ought to do—transcending, as far as is humanly possible, our own nationalistic interests, yet to reflect our own continental anguish serves a useful purpose. For, in the last resort, we are part and parcel of that larger humanity, looking ahead.

40. Three days ago, in my brief intervention on the question of Cyprus—that is to say, on 9 June—I had this to say in addressing the Council:

“It is our continent now which is suffering most the results of aggression and the tragedies and calamity of war. Suffice it to mention that no less than fifteen States on the continent of Asia are right now at this moment in an active and actual state of war as a result of imperialism and its machinations in our area”—our ancient continent. “Whether it be South-East Asia or western Asia, referred to as the Middle East, we all know of the ravages of war that are devastating that part of the world.” [1543rd meeting, para. 165.]

41. Such a lamentation is not made solely by spokesmen of Asia: the masses of Africa and Latin America are also suffering, although perhaps they are not being equally devastated by war as we are.

42. Take at random the majority of the eighty representatives who participated during the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly in the discussion of the item “The strengthening of international peace and security” in the First Committee, and you will find similar, if not stronger, complaints. This is the representative of Mali speaking at the 1659th meeting of the First Committee:

“The tragedy of Viet-Nam, of Arab Palestine, the unspeakable and inhuman behaviour of the white racists in South Africa and Rhodesia and the barbarous repression by Portugal in Africa are not elements of the past or even of the recent past. They are parts of every day reality which we experience and regard with feelings of utmost indignation.”

43. And so, as we turn our gaze we still find, on this very day as we are deliberating, hamlets, towns and villages destroyed by chemical and biological warfare—barbarously, savagely—in Indo-China and large crowds being driven for the second and third time from their homeland to become refugees for decades in squalid camps. But even in those camps they are not secure, for when they are not visited by the napalm bombs of the Phantoms and the Skyhawks, or shelled by the cannons of the armies, then they are visited by calamities of nature: floods that wash away their tents, hurricanes that uproot their weak dwellings, snow-storms where it had never snowed. In a word, it is as though a Greek tragedy were being played out in which the anger of arbitrary gods threatened and the doors of hell and evil were opened.

44. I wish I could find another description—a less dramatic one—but this, Mr. President, is your continent and mine. And why is it at war? Because what we thought to be independence and sovereignty was not so much earned, in spite of all the sacrifices of

our people and the hundreds and tens of thousands killed, but rather was granted in forms that suited the former colonizers. And, let us confess it, we are still operating under those forms. We are still in search of ourselves. And whose responsibility is it? Here I will let a great living French philosopher answer that question. Jean Paul Sartre, in his preface to *The Wretched of the Earth* by Frantz Fanon:<sup>6</sup> He says on page 7,

“Not so very long ago, the earth numbered two thousand million inhabitants; five hundred million men, and one thousand, five hundred million natives. The former had the Word; the others had the use of it.”

And he goes on to say on page 15, commenting on the plight of the natives, such as ourselves:

“You said they understand nothing but violence? Of course; first, the only violence is the settlers’; but soon they will make it their own; that is to say, the same violence is thrown back upon us as when our reflection comes forward to meet us when we go toward a mirror.”

On page 18 he concludes: “. . . this irrepressible violence is neither sound and fury, nor the resurrection of savage instincts, nor even the effect of resentment: it is man recreating itself.” These, Mr. President, are your people and my people. These are the toiling masses of Asia, Africa and Latin America. These are the salt of the earth.

45. Mr. KASPRZYK (Poland): The members of the Security Council have expressed their consensus on the question of initiating periodic meetings of the Council. In this connexion I cannot fail to avail myself of this opportunity to express my delegation’s appreciation to the delegation of Finland for its efforts in bringing the question of periodic meetings to a successful conclusion. The active role that Finland has been playing for a long time in many fields of international life and, among others, in efforts to strengthen security in Europe is highly appreciated by the Polish Government and people.

46. The Polish People’s Republic has always been of the opinion that the provisions contained in the United Nations Charter, based on the principle of peaceful coexistence of States with different social and political systems, are the fundamental premises for maintenance and consolidation of international peace and security.

47. The interests of international peace and security and at the same time the consolidation of the authority and prestige of the United Nations would, however, be best secured if the present aggressive wars and other centres of international tension which threaten world peace were effectively eliminated, if the provisions of the Charter were fully observed and if the decisions

<sup>6</sup> Grove Press Inc., New York, 1966.

of the United Nations were generally and strictly respected and implemented.

48. The expression of the consensus on periodic meetings of the Security Council in accordance with Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter in this year of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations is a step forward in fuller utilization of the Charter. In this connexion I should like to point out that the Government of the Polish People's Republic in its note dated 22 April 1970 to the Secretary-General on the question of the strengthening of international security,<sup>7</sup> *inter alia*, drew attention to the urgent task of aiming at:

"Fuller utilization of all constructive possibilities which are created by the provisions of the United Nations Charter concerning the tasks and role of the Security Council as the principal organ of the United Nations responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. In conformity with the position taken during the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the Government of the Polish People's Republic supports the idea of periodic meetings of the Security Council with the participation of members of Governments or other especially appointed representatives."

49. That is why the Polish delegation warmly welcomes the decision taken by the Security Council.

50. Mr. DE PINIES (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Allow me, Mr. President, to congratulate you upon your assumption of the Presidency of this high organ of the United Nations, the Security Council. You gave us good proof last year of your ability to hold such a high post and the other day we had occasion once again to see with what great skill you presided over our debates.

51. My delegation would also like to congratulate the Ambassador of France upon the very fine manner in which he carried out the duties of President of the Security Council during the month of May, when the Security Council was very active.

52. As early as last October, during the course of the debate in the First Committee of the General Assembly on the item "Strengthening of international security", proposed by the Soviet Union, the delegation of my country had an opportunity to express an opinion in favour of the convening of periodic meetings of the Security Council in which members of Governments would participate under Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter. On that occasion the Spanish delegation pointed out the advantages of flexibility and the effectiveness which such a system would have and emphasized that peace and international security would be strengthened under such a system. My delegation said on that occasion:

"These periodic meetings would provide a suitable framework for examining questions affecting the

general state of international security and causing permanent danger and tension."<sup>8</sup>

53. Therefore, my delegation is very happy that, thanks to the initiative of the representative of Finland and following upon appropriate consultations, we have been able to reach the consensus which the President has just read out, and which in our opinion offers many possibilities for the work of the Security Council in fulfilment of its functions as established in the Charter.

54. We trust that the presence of high-ranking personalities at the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations will provide a good opportunity for the holding of the first of these periodic meetings.

55. Mr. YOST (United States of America): Mr. President, it is rare indeed when this Council takes unanimous action twice in one week. This happy coincidence, we hope, will prove to be a good omen for the decision which you, Sir, have just announced on behalf of all members of the Council.

56. We find that the decision to hold periodic meetings of the Council, as provided for in Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter, to be particularly fitting during this twenty-fifth anniversary year of the founding of the United Nations. The origins of this provision and the attempts over the years by three Secretaries-General, the General Assembly, and individual Members to activate it have been set out in the memorandum prepared by the delegation of Finland and circulated as document S/9759. That document correctly states that previous efforts to implement this important Charter provision failed not on their merits but on the basis of the prevailing atmosphere at the time when they were made.

57. The United States concurs with that assessment. Of course, the present state of international affairs can even now hardly be described as tranquil and ideally suited to thoughtful initiatives designed to accomplish the longer-range goal of gradually building a suitable foundation for peaceful change. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that a perfect time for such an initiative will ever exist, and a start should be made. All of us owe a debt of gratitude to the representative of Finland, Ambassador Jakobson, for refusing to be discouraged, for seizing the initiative and in patient consultations working out the consensus which you, Mr. President, were good enough to read to us a few minutes ago.

58. Of course no organ, no matter how important, can assure success through the adoption of procedures alone. The test will come during the periodic meetings themselves in the quality of the preparation, which will be a vital element, and in the statesmanship shown in the general exchange on the all-important problems under consideration. Parenthetically, I should like to note that it is our understanding that resolutions on

<sup>7</sup> See document A/7922.

<sup>8</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, First Committee*, 1659th meeting, para. 53.

individual subjects will not, as a general rule, be adopted during the periodic meetings.

59. If this important provision of the Charter is utilized effectively as intended by its drafters, this could make a significant contribution towards strengthening the role of the United Nations, and the Council in particular, in fulfilling its chief function of maintaining international peace and security.

60. Mr. LIU (China): Mr. President, as I did not speak at the last meeting, may I take this opportunity to associate my delegation with the high tributes that have been extended to you on your second term as President of the Council, and also to your predecessor, the Ambassador of France.

61. My delegation welcomes the initiative taken by the representative of Finland to activate a provision of the Charter which has been in a state of dormancy for a quarter of a century. Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter provides that the Security Council "shall hold periodic meetings", without, however, specifying the frequency of such meetings. The late Secretary-General Trygve Lie favoured semi-annual meetings, and his suggestion has found expression in rule 4 of the provisional rules of procedure, which stipulates that periodic meetings should be held "twice a year, at such times as the Security Council may decide". Yet, in the entire history of the United Nations no periodic meetings of the Security Council have ever been held.

62. This does not mean that the relevant provisions of the Charter and the provisional rules of procedure have been forgotten. On the contrary, recommendations have from time to time been made, both by successive Secretaries-General and by the General Assembly, to revive periodic meetings. As early as 1950, Secretary-General Trygve Lie made the inauguration of periodic meetings the first of the ten points in his twenty-year programme for peace through the United Nations.<sup>9</sup> Two years later, the General Assembly, in resolution 503 B (VI), recommended:

"... that the Security Council... should convene a periodic meeting to consider what measures might ensure the removal of the tension at present existing in international relations and the establishment of friendly relations between countries whenever such a meeting would usefully serve to remove such tension and establish such friendly relations in furtherance of the purposes and principles of the Charter".

Why then have these suggestions not been translated into action?

63. In his introduction to the annual report in 1967, Secretary-General U Thant wrote:

"It appears to me that previous efforts to implement the relevant provisions on periodic meetings

of the Security Council failed not on their merits but on the basis of the prevailing atmosphere at the times when they were made."<sup>10</sup>

64. At the same time, I believe that there are other reasons for this failure. The origin of the Charter provision for periodic meetings, as we know, was a compromise between the positions of the United States and the United Kingdom. The United States proposal that the Security Council be "so organized as to be able to function continuously" was readily accepted at Dumbarton Oaks and at San Francisco. But in order to ensure that the Foreign Ministers of States members of the Council would have the opportunity to meet and consider matters of common concern, the British proposal for periodic meetings was also included in the Charter.

65. But the difference between continuous and periodic meetings seems more technical than substantive. In the past decades, when the Security Council had been called into session at frequent intervals and often on an urgent basis, the need for periodic meetings as such was not deemed to be of such urgency as to call for early implementation of that provision. Indeed, there were times when the meetings of the Security Council were attended by Foreign Ministers and other specially designated representatives. One readily recalls the series of meetings held in October 1956 during the Suez crisis, which were attended by the Foreign Ministers of such member States as Belgium, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States. The Foreign Ministers of non-Council members such as Egypt and Israel also attended. After the general debate, the Council discussed the Suez problem in three closed sessions. These meetings could be said to be on a high level as envisaged by Article 28, paragraph 2, though they were not designated as periodic meetings.

66. No one, I believe, has any illusions about the magical potency of periodic meetings. There is no reason to suppose that problems that have hitherto defied solution would instantly be resolved once they are discussed in periodic meetings. Mr. Trygve Lie was well aware of this when he wrote, in the introduction to his annual report in 1950, that it must be

"... understood in advance that such [periodic] meetings cannot be expected to produce solutions by magic and that they should be regarded instead as an important part of a continuing process of negotiation—a process which in the United Nations should never end."<sup>11</sup>

67. It is the earnest hope of my delegation that the consensus we have just unanimously adopted may prove to be the first step towards the strengthening of the Security Council in the exercise of its primary responsibilities in the maintenance of international peace and security.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, Twenty-second Session, Supplement No. 1A, para. 159.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, Fifth Session, Supplement No. 1, p. xii.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, Fifth Session, Annexes, agenda item 60, document A/1304.

68. Mr. HILDYARD (United Kingdom): I should first of all like to pay tribute to the representative of Finland, whose efforts and resolve have been so largely instrumental in bringing this item to the Council and in reaching the agreement embodied in the consensus which you, Mr. President, read out to us a short while ago. I believe that all of us have greatly admired the thoughtful and constructive part which the representative of Finland, aided by his able colleagues, has played in the affairs of this Council over the last year and a half.

69. My Government has long been interested in the possibility of ministerial participation in meetings of the Security Council. Indeed, as the representative of Finland himself pointed out in the note which he circulated to members of the Council on 20 April [S/9759], this interest dates back to the foundation of the United Nations itself. In 1958 the United Kingdom put forward, together with the United States, a proposal for the holding of a meeting under Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter, a proposal which it was not possible then to pursue. In 1967 we expressed support for a similar proposal by the Secretary-General, who, like his predecessors, has consistently advocated the activation of that Article. We are glad that the proposal now put before the Council has the Secretary-General's support.

70. My Government has always believed that it was right that the Charter of the United Nations should confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and is always glad to consider any proposal advanced with the purpose of enabling the Council to play the role assigned to it more effectively. We welcome the indications that there may now be a wider measure of agreement on a number of issues than at certain periods in the past. We hope that the practice of mutual consultation amongst members of the Council will be strengthened if Foreign Ministers or other specially designated representatives of Member States can from time to time, and after appropriate preparation, meet productively for private and informal exchanges of view with the object of exploring common ground and seeking to harmonize attitudes and objectives. As my Prime Minister said in a speech to the United Nations Association of the United Kingdom on 18 April, we believe that such contacts, as informal and non-controversial as possible, can help to widen insight into one another's point of view and can perhaps help to forestall difficulties before they arise. My Government will be much interested to see how the first meeting develops and my Foreign Secretary looks forward to participating in person.

71. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): The Security Council has met today to consider a question directly related to its basic responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations as the principal organ of the United Nations concerned with the maintenance of peace and security. In order to discharge this task, its primary task, the Security Council in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations is so organized as to be able

to function continuously. This provision of the Charter is full of profound significance. It means above all that the Security Council must always be ready to consider without delay any act of aggression, and any situation or dispute which represents a threat to international peace and security, and it must be ready to take appropriate decisions.

72. The extent to which the Security Council is discharging this function, which is related to the need to react to specific crisis situations in the world, may be seen from the experience of its work. In the twenty-five years of its activities, the Security Council has held a total of more than fifteen hundred meetings—an average of sixty-three meetings a year—mainly to consider situations of this kind. In other words, the Security Council has been meeting on an average of not less than once a week. Thus, the provision in the Charter concerning the continuous functioning of the Security Council is being implemented. It must be admitted that the Council is not always in a position to take an effective decision on the questions under consideration. And its decisions are not always complied with by those who are obliged under the Charter to do so. But that is another question.

73. At the present time, in the context of the Council's agenda for today, the Soviet delegation is only touching upon this question incidentally, although it is of course a question of immense importance, requiring serious thought by everyone who is interested in strengthening the role of the United Nations and the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace. At the present time the Soviet delegation would like to stress another point—namely, that the Security Council is in fact functioning continuously, as provided for in the Charter, but it must be admitted that the Council's possibilities under the Charter of the United Nations, with regard to the functioning of the Security Council, are not being fully utilized.

74. As is known, the Charter provides for consideration by the Security Council not only of specific questions relating to the maintenance or restoration of international peace which arise in various parts of the world. The Charter also contains in Article 28, paragraph 2, another provision as follows:

“The Security Council shall hold periodic meetings at which each of its members may, if it so desires, be represented by a member of the Government or by some other specially designated representative.”

75. Everyone, it would seem, understands the great importance of this provision of the Charter. In essence, it defines one more form of activity for the Council which might be useful. As a continuously functioning organ, the Security Council acts as an organ primarily taking decisions to put an end to inter-State conflict situations which have already begun, to stop or terminate conflicts which are ready to explode at any moment, while at its periodic meetings the Security Council is called upon to act as an organ which does important work in conducting a general survey of the international horizon and in forestalling the possibility

of international complications in a wider sense. This is a very important function but one which, during the quarter of a century that the United Nations has existed, has not so far been exercised in practice.

76. Nevertheless, it would be difficult not to agree that the international situation calls for the maximum utilization of all the Security Council's possibilities for strengthening peace.

77. Faithful to the policy of peace and friendship among peoples, the policy—bequeathed to us by Lenin, the great founder of the Soviet State—of consistently strengthening international peace and security, the Soviet Union is persistently and consistently struggling to strengthen international peace and consolidate international security, believing that this is in the vital interests of all peoples of the world, large and small. As is known, the Soviet Union has repeatedly put forward specific proposals in this regard.

78. It was precisely in accordance with this policy of principle which the Soviet Union is pursuing in the field of international relations that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Mr. A. A. Gromyko, at the twenty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly, acting on the instructions of the Government of the USSR, proposed for consideration by the Assembly, as an important and urgent matter, an item entitled "The strengthening of international security".<sup>12</sup> As is known, this item attracted the interest of all delegations and became practically the most important political question of that session. By a decision of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly<sup>13</sup> it has been included in the agenda for the forthcoming twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly so that it can be discussed, and so that a suitably detailed document on this question, on the strengthening of international security, can be adopted.

79. An integral part of the Soviet Union's proposals concerning the strengthening of international security as submitted for consideration by the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly, is of course the proposal for giving effect to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations relating to periodic meetings of the Security Council.<sup>14</sup> The Soviet Union suggested at that time that the Security Council should, at its periodic meetings provided for under Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter, consider the general state of international security with a view to elaborating urgent measures to strengthen it.

80. We note with great satisfaction that this proposal aroused considerable interest and wide support on the part of the delegations of many States Members of the United Nations both in the general debate at plenary meetings of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly and during the First Committee's consideration of the question of strengthening international secu-

urity. The timeliness and importance of the Soviet Union's presentation of this question is also confirmed in the replies which have already been received from States Members of the United Nations in response to the request made by the Secretary-General in accordance with resolution 2606 (XXIV) on the question of strengthening international security.

81. A study of these replies, which have been published recently in a report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations,<sup>15</sup> shows that the States Members of the United Nations consider the proposal for periodic meetings of the Security Council timely, urgent and very important. Also deserving of attention is the fact that this view is shared both by States who are members of the Security Council and also by a wider circle of States Members of the United Nations.

82. In our view, therefore, the proposal put forward by one of the states members of the Security Council—Finland—[S/9759] is timely and deserving of attention and support as also are the efforts which have been made by its representative, Ambassador Jakobson, with regard to giving practical expression and effect forthwith to the prevailing view in the United Nations that periodic meetings of the Security Council and the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Charter concerning this question will contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security.

83. We also note with pleasure that U Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nations, has used his authority and influence to support the idea that it would be advisable and useful for the Security Council to hold periodic meetings.

84. Taking all this into account, the Soviet delegation cannot fail to note also the unanimity with which States Members of the Security Council have supported the idea of holding periodic meetings of the Security Council and that this unanimity has been expressed in an agreed view, in a consensus, on this question, the text of which was adopted at the beginning of this meeting and which, we understand, will be issued as an official document of the Security Council.

85. The Soviet delegation, for its part, supports this consensus on the understanding that the question of the date and other practical aspects of the first periodic meeting will be agreed upon subsequently, taking into account, of course, the international situation at the time.

86. Obviously, the introduction of periodic meetings of the Security Council, however important a beginning it might be, still cannot by itself automatically guarantee that the present tension in the international situation will suddenly and radically change for the better. For this, a wide range of specific measures to strengthen international security will have to be taken both by the United Nations as a whole and by each State Member of the United Nations individually. It was precisely this which the Soviet Government had

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, Twenty-fourth Session, Annexes, agenda item 103, document A/7654.

<sup>13</sup> See General Assembly resolution 2606 (XXIV).

<sup>14</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 103, document A/7903, para. 7.

<sup>15</sup> Document A/7922.

in mind when it submitted an extensive programme of such measures for the consideration of the General Assembly.

87. In order to improve and normalize the international situation it is essential for all States Members of the United Nations—and this, in our opinion, is extremely important—to pursue a policy of peace, strictly in keeping with the purposes and principles of the United Nations. In the final analysis it is precisely this—the policy of States, especially the great Powers—which determines the real state of affairs in the world. Aggression, the spread of aggression, the seizure of foreign territories, the murdering of peaceful populations, women, children and old people, the destruction of towns and inhabited localities, the provocation of international conflicts, support for an aggressor who seizes foreign territory and refuses to withdraw his forces from it—all these dangerous phenomena in contemporary international relations are causing the international situation to deteriorate to the point where no forums and no decisions of United Nations bodies can by themselves automatically change the situation. The Soviet delegation considers it necessary to draw the attention of all members of the Security Council to this grim but real fact of the contemporary situation.

88. The Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Mr. A. N. Kosygin, speaking about the foreign policy of the Soviet Union in a statement to the electors, on 10 June in Moscow, reported in Pravda of 11 June 1970, stressed that:

“Our policy is a policy of peace and friendship among peoples. We have pursued it since the first day of the existence of the Soviet State, and it remains our immutable course. The policy of peace pursued by the Soviet Union and the other socialist States is combined with a categorical rejection of the aggressive policy of the imperialist forces. These two sides of our policy are inseparably linked together, for it is impossible to maintain and strengthen peace without fighting the forces which are violating it.”

89. In conclusion, the Soviet delegation would like to express its satisfaction that today's meeting of the Council constitutes a substantial beginning in the practical realization of the important and still unutilized possibilities contained in the Charter of the United Nations regarding the competence and functioning of the Security Council and the enhancement of its role and effectiveness in strengthening international peace and the security of the peoples. This is fully in accordance with the position of the Soviet Union. In

the Soviet Government's reply to the letter from the Secretary-General of the United Nations concerning the question of strengthening international security—this reply was sent by Mr. Gromyko, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, and is included in the report of the Secretary-General to which I have referred earlier—it is stated that the Soviet Union favours the adoption at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly of a comprehensive decision on the question of measures for the strengthening of international security, and believes that this decision should contain, in addition to a number of other Soviet proposals, the provision concerning the enhancement of the role and effectiveness of the Security Council, as the organ bearing primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

90. The PRESIDENT: Since there are no further speakers on my list, I should like, with the indulgence of the members of the Council, to make a statement in my capacity as representative of NEPAL.

91. My delegation has welcomed the initiative of the Finnish delegation in calling for a meeting of the Security Council to consider the question of initiating the implementation of Article 28, paragraph 2, of the Charter [S/9824]. We have also welcomed the consensus statement made by the Chair. The views of my delegation on this question were made clear in the statement of the Nepalese representative at the 1658th meeting of the First Committee of the General Assembly when it considered the Soviet proposal concerning the strengthening of international security. We stated then that, according to our understanding, the founders envisaged the role of the Security Council not as limited strictly to action after the event but as that of the guide and leader of events too. My delegation went on to say:

“All three Secretaries-General of the Organization have made repeated suggestions for the active implementation of Article 28, paragraph 2. The atmosphere, so far as it relates to the relationship between the present four permanent members of the Council, has somewhat improved. To that extent, and in a limited way, such periodic meetings could be useful.”

92. My delegation then pointed out the fact that since 1949 the Security Council had been suffering a serious institutional weakness which had vitally affected its role as an effective instrument for international peace and security.

*The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.*

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